I claim:

1.   A method of operating a programmed computer for offering for sale collectibles on a primary market and on a secondary market, said method comprising the steps of:

5   a)   offering for sale an initial placement of one or more selected collectibles on a primary market;

          b)   receiving orders from prospective purchasers on selected of the collectibles and allocating the selected collectibles to certain successful purchasers; and

10   c)   offering for sale at the direction of certain of said purchasers selected of the allocated collectibles on a secondary market.

2.   The method of offering for sale collectibles as claimed in claim 1, further including
15   the step of limiting the number of collectibles of one kind to be offered for sale on said primary market.

3.   The method of offering for sale collectibles as claimed in claim 1, wherein the collectibles comprise trading cards.

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4.   The method of offering for sale collectibles as claimed in claim 1, wherein said offering for sale on said primary market is carried out for a first selected, predetermined period of time.

25   5.   The method of offering for sale collectibles as claimed in claim 4, wherein said offering for sale on said secondary market is carried out for a second selected period of time.

6.   The method of offering for sale collectibles as claimed in claim 5, wherein said second period of time is greater than said first period of time.

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7. The method of offering for sale collectibles as claimed in claim 1, further including the step of predetermining said number of collectibles to be offered for sale on said primary market before said step of offering for sale on said primary market begins.

5 8. The method of offering for sale as claimed in claim 7, wherein said step of allocating counts the number of collectibles for which orders have been placed.

9. The method of offering for sale as claimed in claim 8, wherein said step of allocating further compares said number of counted collectibles with said predetermined number of
10 collectibles.

10. The method of offering for sale as claimed in claim 9, wherein if said counted number of collectibles exceed said predetermined number of collectibles, said step of allocating reduces the number of collectibles to be allocated in accordance with a predefined algorithm.

15 11. The method of offering for sale as claimed in claim 10, wherein said offering for sale on said primary market is carried out for a predetermined period of time commencing at a certain time, said predefined algorithm increases the number of collectibles to be allocated to a certain purchaser as an inverse function of the period of time occurring between said
20 certain time and the time when an order was received from said certain purchaser.

12. The method of offering for sale as claimed in claim 10, wherein there is further included a step of maintaining a record of the purchasing activity of each purchaser, said algorithm allocating the number of collectibles to a certain purchaser as a direct function of
25 said purchasing activity of the certain purchaser.

13. The method of offering for sale as claimed in claim 1, wherein there is further included the step of providing lots of the collectibles for offering for sale on said primary market.

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14.   The method of offering for sale as claimed in claim 13, wherein there is further provided the step of providing collectibles of different kinds, and assembling the collectibles into lots such that each lot of the collectibles are of the same kind.

5   15.   The method of offering for sale as claimed in claim 1, wherein there is further provided the step of enabling the successful purchasers of collectibles on said primary market to elect to have an offering for sale administrator hold their purchased collectibles in escrow.

10   16.   The method of offering for sale as claimed in claim 1, wherein there is further included the steps of providing a purchaser history database for keeping a record of each purchaser that has placed an order in the course of said offering for sale on said primary market, and updating data indicative of each collectible held in escrow in that record of the purchaser holding the escrowed collectible.

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17.   The method of offering for sale as claimed in claim 1, wherein each of said purchaser's orders received in step b) includes a number of the collectibles wanted by the purchaser.

20   18.   The method of offering for sale as claimed in claim 1, wherein there is further included the step of predefining the number of collectibles before carrying out said step of offering for sale on said primary market.

19.   The method of offering for sale as claimed in claim 18, wherein there is further
25   included the step of providing a purchaser history database for keeping a record for each purchaser that has placed an order in the course of said offering for sale on said primary market, and updating for each order data indicative of said number of collectibles in that record of the purchaser placing that order.

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20.   A method of preparing a server to support a plurality of purchaser systems to transmit over the Internet orders for collectibles being offered for sale on a primary market and a secondary market, said method comprising the steps of:

5   a)   constructing at the server a purchaser history database;

           b)   offering for sale an initial placement of a number of selected collectibles on a primary market;

10   c)   creating at least an account in the purchaser history database for each purchaser transmitting to the server an order for a collectible offered for sale on the primary market, each account including a record of the purchasing activity of its purchaser;

15   d)   allocating said selected collectibles to the successful purchasers; and

           e)   offering for sale at the direction of certain of the successful purchasers selected of said allocated collectibles on a secondary market.

20   21.   The method of preparing a server as claimed in claim 20, wherein there is further included the steps of receiving orders from all of the purchasers who placed orders during said offering for sale on said primary and secondary markets, and updating for each received order placed during said offering for sale on said primary market data that reflects the ordering activity of its purchaser and is stored in said record of its purchaser placing that
25   order.

22.   The method of preparing a server as claimed in claim 21, wherein said ordering activity includes a number of said received orders, and there is included a step of incrementing said number of orders in response to the receipt of each order.

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23.   The method of preparing a server as claimed in claim 21, wherein said ordering activity includes a number, and there is further included the steps of incrementing said number in response to the receipt of each order during said step of offering for sale on said primary market.

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24.   The method of preparing a server as claimed in claim 23, wherein said step of allocating the collectibles to selected of the purchasers in accordance with an algorithm, said algorithm setting a number of collectibles to be allocated to each of said purchasers in accordance with said purchasing activity of the purchaser.

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25.   The method of preparing a server as claimed in claim 24, wherein said algorithm sets the number of collectibles to be allocated to each of said purchasers as a function directly proportional to said number of received orders for each purchaser.

15   26.   The method of preparing a server as claimed in claim 20, wherein there is further included the step of updating the records of said successful purchasers on said primary market with data indicative of their respective allocated collectibles.

27.   The method of preparing a server as claimed in claim 26, wherein there is included

20   the steps of receiving bids from purchasers for selected of said collectibles during said offering for sale on said secondary market, determining the winning bids on each collectible sold on said secondary market and updating the records of the successful purchasers on said secondary market with data indicative of the purchased collectibles.

25   28.   A server designed to support a plurality of purchaser systems to transmit over the Internet to said server orders for selected collectibles being offered for sale on a primary market and a secondary market, said server comprising:

        a)   a programmed server engine that implements a first offering for sale of an

30   initial placement of collectibles on a primary market and a second offering for sale on

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a secondary market of the collectibles purchased during said first offering for sale; and

b)   a purchaser history database that keeps a record for each purchaser that places
5   orders at least during said first offering for sale.

29.   The server as claimed in claim 28, wherein said server engine responds to each order received from an identifiable purchaser to update said record of the identified purchaser.

10   30.   The server as claimed in claim 29, wherein said server engine is programmed to allocate the collectibles among the successful ones of the purchasers who transmitted orders during said first offering for sale based on a predefined algorithm.

31.   The server as claimed in claim 30, wherein said server engine updates said records of
15   said successful purchaser with data indicative of the collectibles purchased during said first offering for sale.

32.   The server as claimed in claim 31, wherein said server engine is programmed to respond to messages from certain of the successful purchasers to place in escrow selected of
20   their collectibles that were purchased during said first offering for sale, by updating said records of said certain respective purchasers with data indicative of the collectibles held in escrow for said certain successful purchasers.

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